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# IRAQ DURABLE COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Year 2 Quarter I (October 1 – December 31, 2020)

*This document was prepared by Chemonics International for submission to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.*



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## ACRONYMS

APS	Annual Program Statement
BBAC	Bank of Beirut and the Arab Countries
BC	Business Counselor
BCJCI	Business Competitiveness and Job Creation Initiative
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CCO	Community Coordination Officer
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CD	Community Dialogue
CF	Coalition Forces
CGP	Client Growth Plan
CIPE	Center for International Private Enterprise
CO	Contracting Officer
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSA	Conflict System Analysis
DCEO	Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities
DRB	Deal Review Board
FY	Fiscal Year
HR	Human Resources
INA	Iraqi News Agency
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
IT	Information Technology
KO	Knowledge and Outreach
KRG	Kurdistan Region Government
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
LTTA	Long Term Technical Assistance
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSME	Micro, Small, Medium Enterprise
PEA	Political Economy Assessment
PLC	Preemptive Love Coalition
PM	Prime Minister
PMF	Popular Mobilization Forces
PMELP	Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
Q	Quarter
QASP	Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan
RFA	Request for Applications
RFQ	Request for Quotations
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMT	Senior Management Team
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
TAT	Technical Advisory Team
TCN	Third Country National
TO	Task Order
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VSU	Vetting Support Unit
WHO	World Health Organization
Y	Year



## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Iraq Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities (DCEO) project gained considerable momentum during the reporting period as Implementation Plans had been approved, the Senior Management Team (SMT) was reunited in Iraq, and staffing for newly issued task orders was almost completed. COVID continued to be a challenge – curtailing travel, reducing meeting possibilities, and requiring much more investment in communications – nonetheless, DCEO was able to undertake all the preparatory groundwork for full implementation in the next quarter.

The preparatory groundwork included the work of, for the Business Competitiveness and Job Creation Initiative (BCJCI), building a client (business firm) pipeline, assessing potential firms for assistance, and setting the rhythm of the Deal Review Board which sets the stage for a fully developed Client Growth Plan (CGP). It is that signed CGP which will provide assistance and funding to the firms. BCJCI expanded its network of business and trade association contacts and developed an Annual Program Statement as a vehicle to actualize those relationships in early 2021.

On 100 Solutions for Stability (100 Solutions), DCEO developed detailed area profiles of the six selected communities to enable the project to approach the communities appropriately. Community engagements began in the first month of the reporting period and continued throughout, resulting in initial ‘quick win’ confidence building projects. These engagements were a first step toward full community dialogues set for early 2021.

The Marla Ruzicka Iraqi War Victims Fund kicked off quickly with DCEO partner Pre-Emptive Love Coalition (PLC) launching one on one business support in Dohuk, Sinjar, Mosul, and WorkWell programs for those areas and Basrah as well. A request for applications (RFA) drew in a large number of organizations wishing to work with DCEO in support of helping Marla Fund eligible beneficiaries restart jobs, businesses, and livelihoods.

The Learning Task Order developed a learning agenda to guide collection of data and ongoing analysis ahead of learning events planned for summer 2021. This task order quickly emerged as a nexus point for the entire DCEO project.

Through it all, COVID continued to stalk the landscape as did U.S.-Iran tension and enormous economic hardship in Iraq. Nonetheless, the DCEO team proved itself able to adapt to the circumstances and rise to the occasion, keeping the project on schedule and on target.

## II. INTRODUCTION

This report reflects the quarterly progress of the Iraq Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities (DCEO) project, covering the period of October 1 to December 31, 2020, which represents Year 2, Quarter 1 of the USAID fiscal year. It also fulfills the contractual quarterly performance report deliverable as stipulated in Section F.3.9 of the DCEO Management Task Order (TO 1) contract.

This quarter, DCEO maintained a strong implementation pace for the Management Task Order and made a strong start on the ground for the two implementation task orders: Business Competitiveness and Job Creation Initiative (BCJCI) (TO 2) and 100 Solutions for Stability (100 Solutions) (TO 3), which were awarded on June 25, 2020. In addition, DCEO’s leadership worked closely with USAID to finalize the Learning Agenda and Implementation Plan for the Learning Task Order (TO 4), awarded on July 31, 2020.

DCEO is being implemented by Chemonics International with partners iMAP, Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), CrossBoundary, Five One Labs, and Preemptive Love Coalition (PLC).

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Iraq Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities (DCEO) project is designed to support Iraqis in their efforts to re-establish stable and resilient communities. This five-year project has two main objectives, each of which has two sub-objectives, as follows:

- 1) Increase adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities
  - 1.1 Mitigate drivers of conflict in target communities
  - 1.2 Enhance community leadership of inclusive development
- 2) Advance the economic well-being of communities
  - 2.1 Improve private sector networks
  - 2.2 Increase micro, small, medium enterprise (MSME) development

DCEO is working with local businesses to identify potential areas for growth that will expand their operations, in turn creating new jobs and contributing to an improved local economy. DCEO is also working with communities and local leaderships as they identify specific, local drivers of conflict and enact practical solutions. Similarly, the project will support local business associations and networks, in collaboration with the business community, to identify shared impediments to growth and trade and to collectively advocate. These activities will be supported through capacity building and grants.

Integrated into and across the work of DCEO is support to eligible beneficiaries of the Marla Ruzicka Iraqi War Victims Fund (Marla Fund). These individuals, families, and communities – who are innocent victims of war and terrorism – will receive assistance to establish, rebuild, and grow businesses and gain skills that contribute to secure quality employment.

## III. TASK ORDER I: MANAGEMENT

The Management Task Order (TO) provides overall leadership and support for DCEO. The COP, along with Senior Management Team (SMT) members who lead the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), communications, grants, operations, security, and technical advisory teams worked closely with the task order directors to provide the expertise and effort required to ensure effective planning and implementation.

The Technical Advisory Team (TAT) continued to provide support to both implementation task orders - completing area profiles, identifying potential firms for assistance, and in reviewing potential grantees. The TAT also took the lead in designing and conducting two training curricula to build the capacity of DCEO staff as they prepared to engage with beneficiaries and counterparts. A third training package – COVID-19 Awareness – was conducted to increase staff understanding about modes of transmission and safety precautions. Below is a summary of the training.

- *Communication Training*: the main goal of the training was to ensure that the DCEO team has the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively communicate both internally and externally to the project, and to support the development of an outreach plan and communication strategy for the TOs. The training was conducted by DCEO consultant Ms. Zaina Erhaim, an award-winning expert in communications and media. Ms. Erhaim led dedicated sessions for the SMT, task order teams, and knowledge and outreach, grants, operations, and security



staff. The TAT and consultant will continue to provide mentoring and coaching for the team across DCEO to make sure that the communication strategies are implemented.

- *Community Dialogue (CD) Training:* The CD training is a key entry point for the 100 Solutions team to build their skills in CD and how to approach each targeted community, given the different context in each location. The TAT worked with two CD experts, DCEO consultants Mr. Jean Paul Chami and Mr. Raffi Feghali, to design and tailor the training to suit the Iraqi context. The training was conducted in phases. The first training was conducted with the SMT to build the overall CD strategy. After building the strategy, the consultants, in coordination with the TAT, conducted the training with the DCEO team. The training was calibrated to the varying roles across the team, focusing more on community dialogue with 100 Solutions staff and for BCJCI staff more on the negotiating/mediating role that effective dialogue skills can play. The consultants will supplement the CD training with Conflict System Analysis (CSA) training for the team in the coming quarter. CSA focuses on supporting communities to identify and analyze conflict drivers in order to more effectively work to stabilize.



*The SMT was the first group to participate in the Community Dialogue training with experts Jean Paul and Raffi.*

- *COVID-19 Training:* Crucial to ensuring the safety of staff and continued implementation of all aspects of DCEO, the TAT led the effort to increase the team's knowledge on COVID-19 and to create analysis and protocols to help implement DCEO activities safely. This has grown increasingly important as the growing velocity of implementation has required more direct interaction within the team, and with partners, counterparts, and beneficiaries. DCEO consultant Dr. Abdulkarim Ekzayez, medical doctor and epidemiologist, provided an initial overview about the virus, subsequent updates, and training to ensure safe implementation. The TAT also worked with Dr. Abdulkarim to develop COVID policies and procedures for DCEO, create a project level COVID Committee, and a COVID-19 Situational Analysis Report, which help the SMT to identify the risks, gain a better understanding of the situation, and make safe and sustainable decisions regarding movement restrictions and returning to office.

For BCJCI, DCEO conducted an online pre-application information session on October 22 for potential applicants. The Grants and BCJCI teams worked together to answer participant questions and to provide guidance on how to develop a concept paper. By the November 15 deadline, 12 concept papers had been submitted through the official DCEO grants email. The Grants team conducted an initial

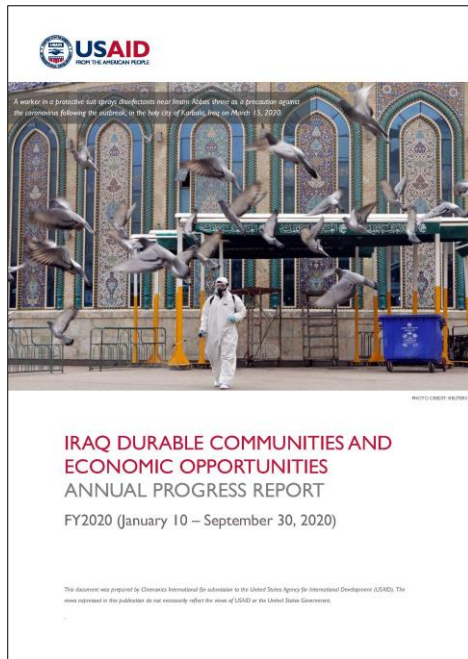


The same process was repeated for 100 Solutions (Marla Fund). DCEO conducted an online pre-application information session on October 26 for potential applicants. The Grants and 100 Solutions teams worked together to answer participant questions and to provide guidance on how to develop a concept paper. By the November 15 deadline, 45 concept papers had been submitted through the official DCEO grants email. The Grants team conducted an initial administrative review of the concept papers and those that were responsive to the RFA were passed on to the 100 Solutions Technical Selection Committee. On November 30, the committee completed their review and recommended that the organizations submitting the six concept papers that had received the highest scores re requested to develop full grant applications. The Grants team conducted an application development preparation workshop on December 6, explaining the grant application process – including vetting, compliance, and risk assessments – and providing guidance on how to fill out the templates for the full application package.

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questions from the VSU were responded to in coordination with DCEO's Procurement and Compliance Manager.

To further build Grants capacity under DCEO, the entire Grants team participated in Chemonics "Getting to Grants" training, conducted by Ms. Diana Shannan, Senior Activity Fund Manager on the Community Support Program being implemented by Chemonics in Lebanon. The training, which took place November 19-25, provided actual examples of grants applications, grants budgets, pre-award risk assessments, and branding and environmental compliance.



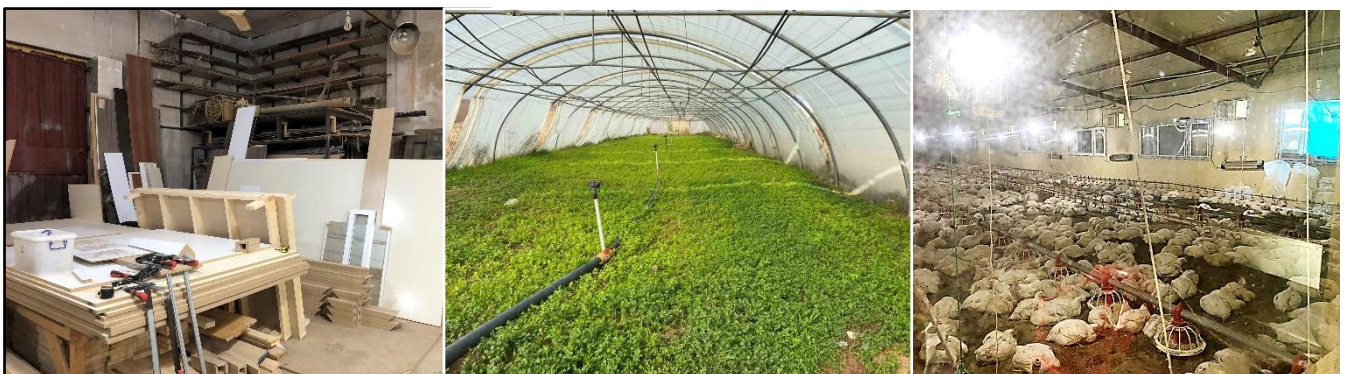
*DCEO submitted its first annual report in October 2020.*

The Knowledge and Outreach team continued to lead the project's reporting function and to refine monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) tools for the two implementation task orders. The team also contributed to the Learning Task Order (TO 4) through technical, managerial, and data collection support. In addition to regular weekly reporting and the quarterly report, DCEO submitted its first annual report. DCEO also began developing and submitting monthly social media content in November.

The Operations and Security teams worked to identify safe and affordable housing for the expatriate staff, secure residencies, provide regular security updates, and fulfill other key supportive functions as needed. Please refer to the Operations section for logistical updates and the Security section for an overview of the situation in Iraq during the quarter.

## IV. TASK ORDER 2: BCJCI

The Business Competitiveness and Job Creation Initiative (BCJCI) Task Order (TO 2) was awarded on June 25, 2020. Building on efforts from the last quarter to lay the foundation for implementation, this quarter, the BCJCI team focused on building awareness and momentum for the project, expressed in a strong pipeline of client firms. This was achieved by active engagement with not only potential client enterprises across Iraq, but also with stakeholders such as government entities, associations, financial institutions, and other development entities.



*DCEO is considering numerous firms across Iraq and from a variety of sectors for technical assistance under BCJCI.*



Through the efforts of five Business Counsellors (BCs) – the task order’s frontline staff – BCJCI identified 73 companies in a variety of sectors from across the Iraqi provinces currently targeted by DCEO. Of these, 27 companies were profiled by the team, despite the limitations COVID imposed on the possibility of in-person meetings. Twelve of these companies are based in Erbil, six in Baghdad, five in Ninewa, four in Basrah, three in Dohuk, and one in Anbar. Thirteen of 27 companies operate in the agricultural or the food sectors. Six profiled entities are industrial companies. The rest are distributed amongst technical/engineering, IT/software, and retail.

The Deal Review Board (DRB) – comprised of the BCJCI Task Order Director, the Private Sector Development Specialist, and the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Technical Adviser with the Chief of Party as an observer – had reviewed nine companies by the end of the quarter, and evaluated them according to the BCJCI criteria, analysing their growth plans, their constraints, and the type of technical assistance that BCJCI can provide. The potential candidates then proceeded to work jointly with the BCJCI to formulate a Client Growth Plan (CGP). Nine CGPs are currently being prepared, and DCEO anticipates finalizing these in the early part of the coming quarter and providing direct assistance to the selected firms. Of these, three are potentially eligible for Marla Fund assistance.

In other areas of Objective 1 of BCJCI, Task Order subcontractors made significant progress in their scopes of work. Five One Labs successfully completed three two-week long Ignite sessions. Ignite is a program designed to support aspiring entrepreneurs to test the feasibility and marketability of their concept. Ignite acts as a funnel for the best ideas into Five One Labs’ 13-week incubator. Twelve entrepreneurs were selected to participate in the incubation stage, scheduled to start in the third week of January 2021. Subcontractor CrossBoundary focuses on helping international investors successfully invest in frontier market firms. CrossBoundary built on their work in the summer of 2020 identifying Iraqi firms that could benefit from their services, conducting a Capital Mapping exercise that identified a catalogue of investors potentially interested in significant investments (USD 1 million and up) in the Iraqi market. At the same time, CrossBoundary began a highly structured engagement with the identified firms in order to develop advisory agreements which describe the bespoke services to be provided to each firm. Through the DCEO CrossBoundary facilitation platform, four advisory agreements were signed. Through these agreements, CrossBoundary is providing advisory services that can facilitate approximately USD 24 million in capital being raised. Finally, as described under the Management Task order section above, BCJCI worked with the Grants team on five potential grants for Objective 1.

For BCJCI Objective 2, *Capacity of trade and business association to identify, address, and remove constraints to business growth and competitiveness strengthened*, the BCJCI team held preliminary discussions with a number of business associations across Iraq. The discussions were important in understanding the common challenges that different Iraqi sectors face across different regions, and the capacity levels of some of these associations. BCJCI has developed an Annual Program Statement (APS), to be released in early 2021 to invite associations in Iraq to submit grant concepts. With the issuance of the APS, BCJCI will achieve important progress under Objective 2 by funding and accelerating the work of associations that support BCJCI desired results and establishing a cohort of important partnerships.

Since the BCJCI Implementation Plan was accepted at the end of the previous quarter, this quarter focused heavily on implementation of the plan which required skill building for BCs and some reworking of templates and the DRB’s terms of reference. The task order also planned, in consultation with the technical advisors, counterparts, and subcontractor CIPE, the design of the

APS aimed at business and trade associations. The BCJCI Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (PMELP) was approved early in the quarter.

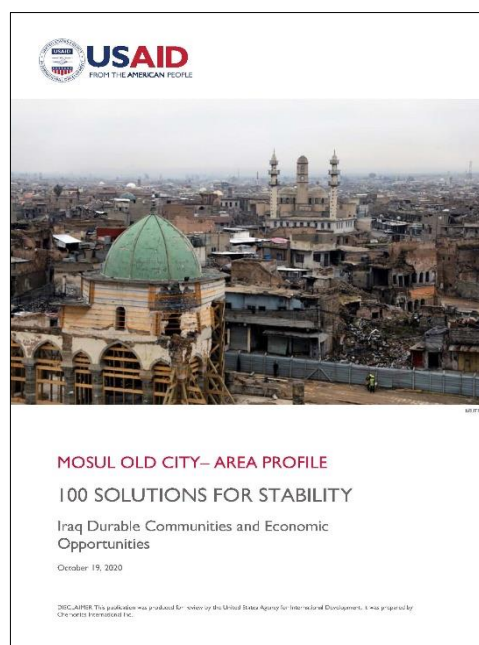
BCJCI continued a biweekly coordination routine with USAID. By the end of the quarter, DCEO, learning and adapting through early implementation, had recruited additional Business Counselors and had two positions yet to fill.

*Note: It is too early in the life of BCJCI to report against indicators, however the BCJCI indicator tracking sheet has been included for reference as Annex A.*

## V. TASK ORDER 3: 100 SOLUTIONS

The 100 Solutions for Stability (100 Solutions) Task Order (TO 3) was awarded on June 25, 2020. The 100 Solutions team spent the first quarter of task order life laying the foundation for its community dialogue work, supporting Marla Fund-eligible beneficiaries, identifying target communities, and initiating area profiles. This quarter, 100 Solutions took concrete steps to progress implementation on both community dialogue and Marla Fund activities.

By December 2020, 100 Solutions had shared the remaining five area profiles with USAID – Mosul University, Mosul Old City (Ninewa), Baharka (Erbil), Zubair (Basrah), and Ramadi (Anbar). Following the completion of area profiles, 100 Solutions Community Coordination Officers (CCOs) – the task order front-line staff – worked on community engagement with key stakeholders in all six target communities. In consideration of the global pandemic, in-person engagement was limited and included only key, community-centric individuals for whom the 100 Solutions target community is a top rather than peripheral priority. Because of the sensitivity inherent to conflict mitigation and community dialogue work, DCEO staff held in person meetings with these key individuals, who were identified through the Area Profiles and by the team of experienced CCOs, to build trust and buy-in for the projects work.



*DCEO submitted five area profiles this quarter.*

Initial engagement included the identification of quick win projects and follow up with stakeholders to review and prioritize the potential projects. As of the end of the quarter, 100 Solutions had started community engagement in all target communities (Mosul Old City; Mosul University; Bahraka, Erbil; Tamim, Ramadi, Anbar; and Zubair, Basrah) and completed the participatory prioritization of quick win projects in Batnaya. The prioritization asked community stakeholders to quantify the suggested quick win projects based on three categories – impact on stability, importance to community, and inclusion. Stakeholders ranked each category from one to 10. Following input from all stakeholders, 100 Solutions compiled the scores and will implement the top one or two scored projects from each of the target communities. In Batnaya, 100 Solutions selected two quick win projects for implementation in the next quarter – (1) awareness sessions about time management, raising children, and dealing with teenagers and (2) playground equipment for the children’s center. The identification and selection process for the quick win

projects served to build confidence in DCEO with the community and key leadership figures by demonstrating that DCEO would (a) work consultatively with the community, providing an early introduction to the community problem solving dialogue process, and (b) respond in a practical manner to community identified needs. The quick wins for the other five 100 Solutions Year One communities will be identified early in the next quarter.



*100 Solutions CCO means with civil activist in Batnaya during the first round of community engagement.*

In its support for victims of conflict in Iraq, 100 Solutions' Marla Fund anchor partner, Preemptive Love Coalition (PLC), started implementation of one to one business support in Sinjar, Dohuk, and Mosul. This assistance is bespoke technical and material assistance to Marla Fund eligible beneficiaries who want to start or accelerate a small business. PLC also provided training to Marla Fund eligible beneficiaries in WorkWell Tech Hubs in Dohuk, Erbil, Mosul, and Basrah. WorkWell is a successful program that equips graduates with skills that enable them to find quality jobs in Iraq's growing digital economy. As of the end of the quarter, PLC had supported 41 businesses and was wrapping up the implementation of the first cohort of WorkWell.

As mentioned under the Management Task Order section, 100 Solutions also completed an RFA for local NGO grantees for Marla Fund activities. Through this process, 100 Solutions has tentatively identified six potential grantees. As of the end of the quarter, 100 Solutions was in the process of pre-award risk assessments and negotiation with each of the six grantees.

At the overall planning level, the most important steps for 100 Solutions this quarter were the submission and acceptance of the revised Implementation Plan. The associated PMELP remained in revision as of the end of the quarter.

100 Solutions continues a biweekly coordination routine with USAID. By the end of the quarter, DCEO onboarded the remaining five Community Coordination Officers and was in the process of selecting Marla Implementation Officers to support the implementation of Marla Fund activities.

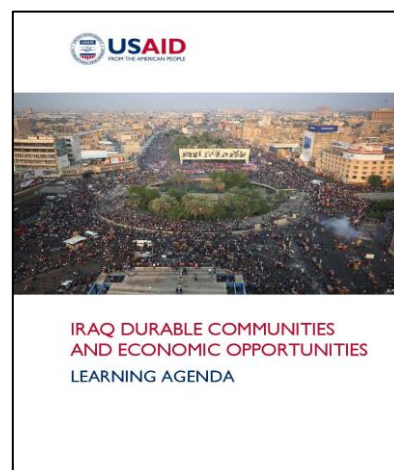
*Note: 100 Solutions is able to provide MEL data for only one indicator (#13) this quarter because it is still early in the life of the task order; some activities that were begun in this quarter will not be completed until next quarter and therefore additional data will be available in the next quarterly report. Please refer to the 100 Solutions indicator tracking sheet, Annex B.*

## **VI. TASK ORDER 4: LEARNING**

The Learning Task Order (TO 4) was awarded on July 31, 2020. Last quarter, DCEO worked closely with USAID to refine the learning agenda and define learning questions. This quarter, DCEO submitted a revised Implementation Plan, Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP), and Learning Agenda. The initial submissions were revised based on USAID feedback and resubmitted. All of the deliverables were subsequently approved by the COR.

Planning for the MEL baseline surveys began towards the end of the quarter, making an important step in the data collection that will inform learning analysis next summer. The community dialogue baseline survey under 100 Solutions is scheduled to be completed in early February. Baseline data for the firms under BCJCI will be collected on a rolling basis as BCs begin to provide technical assistance to selected firms.

After the departure of the previous Learning TO Director, DCEO/Chemonics began recruiting for a new Director. DCEO anticipates putting forward a candidate to USAID early in the coming quarter.



*DCEO's Learning Agenda was finalized in December 2020.*

## VII. NETWORKING AND COORDINATION

DCEO has learned that despite the COVID-related restrictions, a significant amount of networking and coordination is possible using digital platforms, and conducting mission critical meetings in person in well ventilated or outdoor spaces. During the reporting period, during which the entire SMT returned to Erbil from ordered departure, the team both re-established previous relationships



*DCEO team meets with Telkaif Qaimmaqam, Basim Bello.*

and forged new partnerships. Some of the existing relationships included consultations, information sharing, and exploration of mutual leverage points with the humanitarian, UN, and business association community as well as USAID partners like Top Mountain, DAI, and MSI. New relationships with National Bank of Iraq, potential business service providers, the diplomatic community, and other organizations engaged in peace building provided fertile ground for collaboration.

## VIII. COVID-19

DCEO continued to monitor COVID in federal Iraq and KRI this quarter. While Iraq had ascended the WHO list of more than 200 countries/territories to a rank of 16 at the end of the past quarter, exceeding the number of cases in countries with much larger populations, this quarter the ranking dropped to 25. While this may initially be viewed as a positive sign, one cannot ignore that the drop in ranking is due to the exponential increase in cases in countries such as the U.S. over the past quarter.

Unfortunately, while some continued heeding the warnings of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Iraqi Ministry of Health (MOH), DCEO project staff have observed that fewer individuals are seen wearing masks and practicing social distancing in public and many establishments have become lax in enforcing those rules. Recent news around the globe of new variants of the virus make this especially alarming.



## NATIONAL STATISTICS

Iraq continued to experience a significant increase the number of new COVID-19 cases in the reporting period. At the end of the previous quarter, the total number of confirmed cases in Iraq was 362,981, including 9,181 deaths. As of the end of this quarter, the number of cases had climbed to 595,291, including 12,813 deaths. Table I summarizes the rapid increase of COVID-19 cases in Iraq, by quarter, since the first case was reported on February 24.

TABLE I. PROGRESSION OF COVID-19 CASES IN IRAQ

DATE	TOTAL CONFIRMED CASES	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERED	DEATHS
February 24	1	1	0	0
March 31	695	432	170	50
June 30	49,109	22,406	24,760	1,943
September 30	362,981	61,603	292,197	9,181
December 31	595,291	70,263	537,841	12,813

## PROVINCIAL STATISTICS

Figure 1 (below) depicts the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases, per province, in Iraq on September 30 (right) and December 31 (left). Baghdad consistently had the highest number of cases, making up roughly one-third of the total cases in the country. This was not surprising considering it is the most densely populated governorate of Iraq. Basrah had the second highest number of cases (39,812) in Iraq. The province with the lowest number of cases is Anbar, (4,202), nearly doubled the number of cases compared to last quarter. All provinces had significant increases in the number of cases. The KRI provinces account for 17 percent of all of the cases in Iraq.

### COVID-19 CASES IN IRAQ, BY PROVINCE

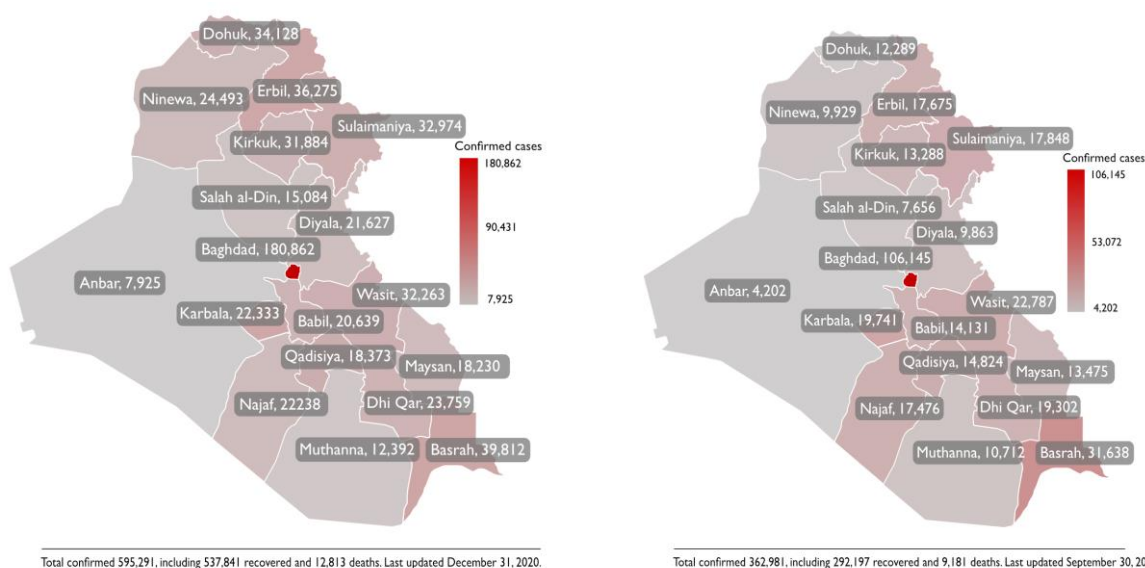


Figure 1: Comparison of confirmed COVID cases in Iraq, by province, between the past quarter and this quarter.



The DCEO COVID map depicted in Figure 1 and other graphics can be found on an Iraq COVID-19 dashboard that DCEO has created. The dashboard displays Iraqi Ministry of Health (MOH) data, and is updated daily when MOH has released its report for the day. The dashboard can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/wf6xcwt>

## **REMOTE MANAGEMENT**

Despite the return of DCEO's SMT to Erbil early in the quarter, remote management remains a reality. Fortunately, DCEO's SMT is highly experienced and adapted to remote management, having worked on projects in conflict areas such as Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, and Somalia – countries where freedom of movement and access is always highly curtailed, even at the best of times. Remote management is now being supplemented with selected meetings held under COVID-aware conditions.

One of the lessons learned and fully exercised during the quarter was that it is possible to build strong teams and mutually supportive relationships amongst a group of people who have never met in person. However, it requires much more deliberate and frequent communication than would be the case in a normal office setting. The DCEO team has adjusted accordingly by leveraging online platforms to stay in contact with each other and partners, and giving various cohorts of staff repeated opportunities to work together across internal team lines. For example, DCEO began to structure intermittent meetings that focused on the geographic location of the staff, as opposed to their technical backstops. The project took advantage of the staff training opportunities, at times building training cohorts that enabled staff who don't necessarily interact regularly and who lack the natural opportunities provided by office life, to interact together in interactive training as teams.

## **DUTY OF CARE**

DCEO Management takes its Duty of Care responsibility very seriously. The SMT continued to touch base with Iraqi staff at least daily as a routine safety check, and security updates from the Security Director were regularly shared with all staff. Additionally, DCEO continued to provide information and guidance to staff on a regular basis, including COVID information sessions provided by epidemiologist Dr. Abdulkarim, as reported under the Management task order section.

The project makes certain that all staff have the equipment and connectivity necessary to enable them to work at home. While during this quarter staff were only present in the office or field as deemed Mission Critical, DCEO will continue to assess the situation in the coming quarter to determine when it will be safe to bring staff back to the office on a more regular basis. The project has equipped the offices with personal protective equipment (PPE) in preparation for staff attending offices once that decision has been made.

## **IX. STAFFING**

This quarter, DCEO continued to benefit from leadership by a strong SMT, exceptional Iraqi staff, and expert consultants. The project built on the platform that was established in the first year of project life and continued to identify and onboard local talent.

### **SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The SMT returned to Erbil this quarter using a phased approach. Table 2 lists the members of the SMT and the date of arrival in Erbil.

**TABLE 2. DCEO SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM**

NAME	POSITION	ARRIVAL TO ERBIL
Martha Myers	Chief of Party	October 9
Faten Taneeb	Knowledge and Outreach Director	October 15
Elyse Wesbey	Operations Director	October 9
Jasmina Dimac	Grants and Implementation Director	October 29
Ammar Kourani	Technical and Advisory Team Director	November 29
Paul Kendrick	Security Director	October 9
Rory Brown	BCJCI Start-Up Director	October 18
Nasser Lama	BCJCI Task Order Director	November 1
Jafar Shami	BCJCI Private Sector Development Specialist	October 26
Anna Bittman	I00 Solutions Task Order Director	Already in Erbil

## ON-BOARDING OF IRAQI STAFF

The DCEO team of Iraqi staff continued to grow. By the end of last quarter, 43 individuals had been hired – under the Management, BCJCI, and I00 Solutions task orders – based in Erbil and Baghdad. This quarter, additional staff were hired – in Erbil, Baghdad, Basrah, and Anbar – bringing the total to 53 Iraqi staff. Please refer to Annex C for a complete list of DCEO’s Iraqi staff.

## X. OPERATIONS

### RETURN TO IRAQ

Upon return of the SMT as referenced above, KRG residency permits were quickly obtained, accommodation secured, and landlords vetted. Despite the challenges of social distancing with vendors and limited use of the office, the Operations Team was able to process timely payments and outfit Erbil residences and the Baghdad office.

### OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

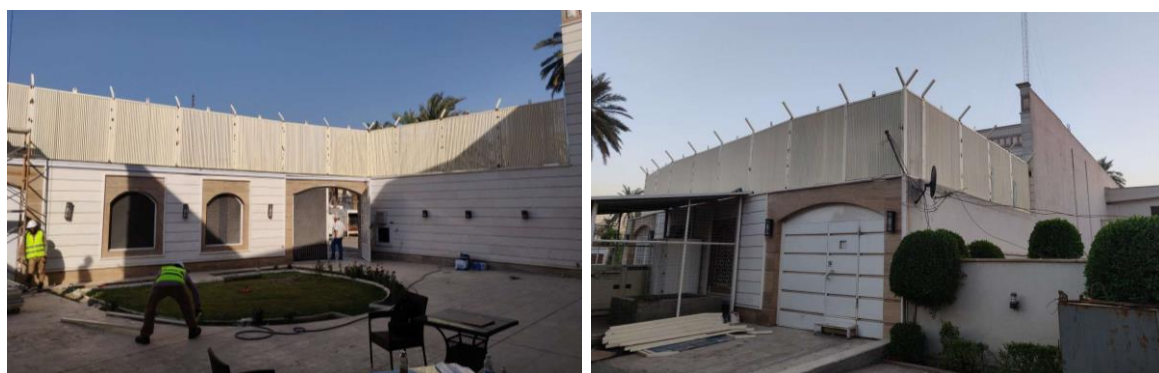
The SMT’s return to Erbil this quarter enabled DCEO to open its KRI bank account at BBAC bank in Erbil, allowing DCEO to process payments independently from the support of Chemonics’ other programs in country. The DCEO Operations Team accomplished several key tasks on the administrative side. Contracts were secured this quarter for Kurdish/Arabic translation services, a new visa services provider in Erbil, and a long-term transportation services provider. Eight commercial leases were negotiated and executed for all SMT members. In November and in accordance with ADS312mac regulations, DCEO submitted a livestock and seed waiver request (AR-DCEO-TO3-003) to support the purchase of agricultural commodities classified by USAID as

restricted goods. The purchase of livestock and seeds will enable Preemptive Love Coalition (PLC) to carry out its agriculture livelihoods activities for Marla Fund beneficiaries.

## ERBIL

DCEO continued to prepare for office occupancy, releasing an RFQ for long-term cleaning services and completing blast film installation for exterior windows. A new contract was executed with a health insurance provider in order to offer staff a more competitive health insurance plan with increased coverage of COVID expenses. The project made arrangements to ensure the SMT's legal status in KRI after residencies were secured for all expatriate staff.

## BAGHDAD



*Metal fencing was installed around the perimeter of the Baghdad office villa as part of the required security upgrades.*

The DCEO Baghdad office and residence, which are all in one building, are ready for occupancy when COVID and security conditions allow. Security upgrades for the DCEO Baghdad office were completed in the reporting period. Subcontractor, Al Sajer, completed all metalwork installations, perimeter and rooftop fencing, painting, CCTV hook-up, and guard caravan installation to support the arrival of static guards. DCEO released the RFQ for long-term static and mobile security services this quarter and began evaluating bids in mid-December. The technical committee is set to make an award early next quarter.

An RFQ for Baghdad Villa appliances was released this quarter, new interior office lighting was installed, as well as blast film on both exterior and interior windows. The U.S. Embassy Baghdad Office added Chemonics' name to the Mission Iraq Contract Registration (MICR) in November, enabling DCEO to obtain multi-entry visas with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and liaise with the Residency Directorate for visa approvals.

## FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

This section includes a summary of expenditures by budget line during the last quarter, cumulative expenditures to date, available funding for the remainder of the program, variances from planned expenditures, and accrued expenditures.

### Task Order I – Management

*Quarterly expenditure.* During the reporting period, DCEO spent a total of \$2,349,933.32 under TO I, for an average burn rate of \$783,311.11/month. This comprises \$533,685.75 in total expenses from the October invoice submitted on November 23, 2020, \$706,901.46 in total expenses from the

November invoice submitted on December 21, 2020, and \$1,109,346.11 expected in total expenses from the December invoice, which will be submitted in January 2021. The table below includes a summary of Y2Q1 expenditure by budget line item under TO 1.

**Table 3. TO 1 Expenditure by Budget Line Item during Year 2 Quarter 1**

Budget Line Item	Contract Budget (A)	Y2 Q1 Expenditure (B)	To Date Expenditure (C)	Contract Funds Remaining (A - C)
Salaries	\$10,184,386.00	\$488,197.46	\$1,563,457.37	\$8,620,928.63
Fringe Benefits	\$5,370,913.00	\$269,939.78	\$871,497.42	\$4,499,415.58
Overhead	\$8,067,603.00	\$408,777.96	\$1,320,080.30	\$6,747,522.70
Travel and Transportation	\$1,063,802.00	\$8,108.12	\$76,696.50	\$987,105.50
Allowances	\$3,331,483.00	\$206,123.72	\$532,329.49	\$2,799,153.51
Other Direct Costs	\$12,697,720.00	\$147,991.11	\$516,842.95	\$12,180,877.05
Equipment, Vehicles, and Freight	\$213,596.00	\$1,800.00	\$102,146.69	\$111,449.31
Subcontracts and Consultants	\$5,941,232.00	\$330,284.86	\$732,273.34	\$5,208,958.66
General and Administrative	\$2,371,659.00	\$98,645.31	\$303,082.63	\$2,068,576.37
Fixed Fee	\$3,693,180.00	\$390,065.00	\$1,106,669.18	\$2,586,510.82
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$52,935,574.00</b>	<b>\$2,349,933.32</b>	<b>\$7,125,075.87</b>	<b>\$45,810,498.13</b>

*Cumulative expenditure to date and available funds.* To date (January 2020-December 2020), DCEO has spent \$7,125,075.87 under TO 1, which represents 67.78 percent of its current obligation (\$10,512,749) and 13.46 percent of its total budget for Life of Project (\$52,935,574). TO 1 has \$45,810,498.13 in available funds, or 86.54 percent, remaining under the contract ceiling.

*Variances from planned expenditures.* Under TO 1, DCEO was on track with planned expenditures and fully anticipates spending up to the contract ceiling. There were no significant cost overruns, high unit costs, or growing pipelines to report. During the quarter, TO 1's expatriate and TCN staff returned to Iraq from evacuation locations, leading to an increase in spending on contract allowances such as post-differential, danger pay, living quarters allowance, and temporary quarters subsistence allowance. The project also onboarded consultants to support media and communication, COVID-19 implementation strategy, community problem solving dialogues, and conflict systems analysis which resulted in increased spending on short-term labor. Security upgrades to the project's Baghdad villa were completed, contributing to an uptick in subcontract spending. Consortium subcontractors iMMAP and CIPE increased their overall technical support to the TO 1 technical advisory team resulting in an increased monthly burn rate. However, coronavirus-related travel restrictions reduced travel and transportation expenditures as short-term technical advisors continued to conduct assignments remotely due to the inability to field to Iraq, and regional and local travel was curtailed. Similarly, DCEO did not require secure transportation services during Y2Q1 due to COVID-related travel restrictions, which reduced planned expenditures on security.

## Task Order 2 – BCJCI

*Quarterly expenditure.* During the reporting period, DCEO spent a total of \$903,750.69 under TO 2, for an average burn rate of \$301,250/month on BCJCI. This comprises \$278,942.76 in total expenses from the October invoice submitted on November 23, 2020, \$378,787.78 in total expenses from the November invoice submitted on December 21, 2020, and \$253,994.20 expected in total expenses

from the December invoice, which will be submitted in January 2021. The table below includes a summary of Y2 Q1 expenditure by budget line item under TO 2.

**Table 4. TO 2 Expenditure by Budget Line Item during Year 2 Quarter 1**

Budget Line Item	Contract Budget (A)	Y2 Q1 Expenditure (B)	To Date Expenditure (C)	Contract Funds Remaining (A - C)
Salaries	\$3,016,222.00	\$195,457.22	\$270,104.05	\$2,746,117.95
Fringe Benefits	\$1,622,630.00	\$83,725.50	\$102,524.44	\$1,520,105.56
Overhead	\$2,513,117.00	\$155,708.24	\$209,780.91	\$2,303,336.09
Travel and Transportation	\$138,873.00	\$5,976.00	\$6,651.60	\$132,221.40
Allowances	\$772,956.00	\$34,818.64	\$34,818.64	\$738,137.36
Other Direct Costs	\$446,624.00	\$21,258.20	\$24,185.83	\$422,438.17
Equipment, Vehicles, and Freight	\$113,060.00	\$9,480.00	\$16,542.00	\$96,518.00
Grant Programs	\$2,684,300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,684,300.00
Subcontracts and Consultants	\$5,889,507.00	\$291,960.00	\$291,960.00	\$5,597,547.00
General and Administrative	\$913,176.00	\$42,314.36	\$50,698.07	\$862,477.93
Fixed Fee	\$1,156,963.00	\$63,052.53	\$75,509.46	\$1,081,453.54
Grants Administration Fee	\$134,215.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$134,215.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$19,401,643.00</b>	<b>\$903,750.69</b>	<b>\$1,082,775.00</b>	<b>\$18,318,868.00</b>

*Cumulative expenditure to date and available funds.* To date (June 2020-December 2020), DCEO has spent \$1,082,775.00 under TO 2, which represents 10.1 percent of its current obligation (\$10,651,868) and 5.5 percent of its total budget for Life of Project (\$19,401,643). TO 2 has \$18,318,868 in available funds, or 94.4 percent, remaining under the contract ceiling.

*Variances from planned expenditures.* Under TO 2, DCEO is on track with planned expenditures and fully anticipates spending up to the contract ceiling. There are no significant cost overruns, high unit costs, or growing pipelines to report. During the quarter, BCJCI primarily incurred labor costs as the project recruited and onboarded key staff including the Private Sector Development Specialist, Jafar Shami, who began on October 4, 2020. Long-term local staff were onboarded and supported technical implementation and submission of BCJCI deliverables. BCJCI experienced a slight variance (overspending) in comparison to the FY2021 Q1 accruals submitted in the Quarterly Financial Report in the category of other direct costs due to IT equipment and computer software procurements necessary for BCJCI start-up. COVID-related travel restrictions reduced international and in-country travel and transportation expenditures as short-term technical advisors conducted assignments remotely due to the inability to field to Iraq and long-term local staff continue to work from home. During the reporting period, BCJCI invoices reflected deliverable payments to subcontractors CrossBoundary and Five One Labs.

### **Task Order 3 – 100 Solutions**

*Quarterly expenditure.* During the reporting period, DCEO will spend a total of \$1,145,229.38 under TO 3, for an average burn rate of \$381,743.13/month. This comprises \$174,064.49 in total expenses from the October invoice submitted on November 23, 2020, \$767,564.52 in total expenses from the November invoice submitted on December 21, 2020, and \$203,600.37 expected in total expenses

from the December invoice, which will be submitted in January 2021. The table below includes a summary of Y2Q1 expenditure by budget line item under TO 3.

<b>Table 5. TO 3 Expenditure by Budget Line Item during Year 2 Quarter 1</b>				
<b>Budget Line Item</b>	<b>Contract Budget (A)</b>	<b>Y2 Q1 Expenditure (B)</b>	<b>To Date Expenditure (C)</b>	<b>Contract Funds Remaining (A - C)</b>
Salaries	\$4,202,764.00	\$202,811.75	\$270,841.27	\$3,931,922.74
Fringe Benefits	\$2,066,454.00	\$99,825.02	\$135,455.69	\$1,930,998.31
Overhead	\$3,392,460.00	\$165,181.77	\$223,479.83	\$3,168,980.17
Travel and Transportation	\$134,849.00	\$310.00	\$310.00	\$134,539.00
Allowances	\$707,448.00	\$20,068.71	\$28,582.69	\$678,865.31
Other Direct Costs	\$509,064.00	\$9,784.09	\$14,912.33	\$494,151.67
Equipment, Vehicles, and Freight	\$166,455.00	\$14,220.00	\$24,442.00	\$142,013.00
Grant Programs	\$6,312,709.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,312,709.00
Subcontracts and Consultants	\$3,500,000.00	\$499,730.00	\$499,730.00	\$3,000,270.00
General and Administrative	\$1,114,686.00	\$53,398.29	\$63,256.24	\$1,051,429.76
Fixed Fee	\$1,184,563.00	\$79,899.76	\$94,496.07	\$1,104,185.60
Grants Administration Fee	\$315,637.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$315,637.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$23,607,089.00</b>	<b>\$1,145,229.38</b>	<b>\$1,355,506.11</b>	<b>\$22,265,701.55</b>

*Cumulative expenditure to date and available funds.* To date (June 2020-December 2020), DCEO has spent \$1,355,506.11 under TO 3, which represents 15.88 percent of its current obligation (\$8,535,000) and 5.74 percent of its total budget for Life of Project (\$23,607,089). TO 3 has \$22,251,582.89 in available funds, or 94.26 percent, remaining under the contract ceiling.

*Variances from planned expenditures.* Under TO 3, DCEO is on track with planned expenditures and fully anticipates spending up to the contract ceiling. There are no significant cost overruns, high unit costs, or growing pipelines to report. During the quarter, 100 Solutions primarily incurred labor and subcontract costs. The project completed the majority of its recruitments during the quarter. Preemptive Love Coalition completed its first two deliverables, developing its work and MEL plans, which include a needs assessment/intake instrument for potential beneficiaries. 100 Solutions experienced negligible variance in comparison to the FY2021 Q1 accruals submitted in the Quarterly Financial Report. COVID-related travel restrictions reduced international and in-country travel and transportation expenditures as short-term technical advisors conducted assignments remotely due to the inability to field to Iraq and long-term local staff continue to work from home.

#### **Task Order 4 – Learning Task Order**

*Quarterly expenditure.* During the reporting period, DCEO spent a total of \$9,805.83 under TO 4, for an average burn rate of \$3,268.61/month. This comprises \$2,550.57 in total expenses from the October invoice submitted on November 23, 2020, \$4,008.62 in total expenses from the November invoice submitted on December 1, 2020, and \$3,246.65 expected in total expenses from the December invoice to be submitted in January 2021. The table below includes a summary of Y2Q1 expenditure by budget line item under TO 4.

**Table 6. TO 4 Expenditure by Budget Line Item during Year 2 Quarter 1**



Budget Line Item	Contract Budget (A)	Y2 Q1 Expenditure (B)	To Date Expenditure (C)	Contract Funds Remaining (A - C)
Salaries	\$230,436.00	\$2,973.17	\$7,050.80	\$223,385.20
Fringe Benefits	\$148,956.00	\$2,348.80	\$5,570.13	\$143,385.87
Overhead	\$220,436.00	\$3,340.61	\$7,922.17	\$212,513.83
Travel and Transportation	\$9,266.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,266.00
Allowances	\$40,412.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$40,412.00
Other Direct Costs	\$22,586.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22,586.00
Subcontracts and Consultants	\$211,236.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$211,236.00
General and Administrative	\$46,905.00	\$459.12	\$1,088.79	\$45,816.21
Fixed Fee	\$69,767.00	\$684.13	\$1,623.94	\$68,143.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,000,000.00</b>	<b>\$9,805.83</b>	<b>\$23,255.83</b>	<b>\$976,744.17</b>

*Cumulative expenditure to date and available funds.* To date (July 2020 - December 2020), DCEO spent \$23,255.83 under TO 4, which represented 7.75 percent of its current obligation (\$300,000) and 2.33 percent of its total budget for Life of Project (\$1,000,000). TO 4 has \$976,744.17 in available funds, or 97.67 percent, remaining under the contract ceiling.

*Variances from planned expenditures.* Under TO 4, DCEO was on track with planned expenditures and fully anticipates spending up to the contract ceiling. There are no significant cost overruns, high unit costs, or growing pipelines to report. During the quarter, the Learning TO primarily incurred labor costs. This quarter, the Task Order Director Peggy Ochandarena departed the project, and as a result the Learning TO experienced a slight variance (underspending). The project promptly began recruiting for a replacement in October and anticipate the position will be filled in the coming quarter with minimal interruption to project implementation or anticipated spending.

## XI. DELIVERABLES SUBMITTED

Table 7 lists the deliverables submitted this quarter.

**TABLE 7. DELIVERABLES SUBMITTED IN Y2Q1**

DATE	DELIVERABLE
October 12	Learning Task Order (TO 4) FY2021 Implementation Plan (first revision)
October 25	Quarterly (Y1Q4) Progress Report
October 28	Annual (FY2020) Progress Report
October 30	Learning Task Order (TO 4) FY2021 Implementation Plan (second revision)
October 31	Management Task Order (TO 1) FY2021 Implementation Plan
November 1	100 Solutions (TO 3) FY2021 Implementation Plan (second revision)
November 3	Learning Task Order (TO 4) Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan
November 6	Learning Task Order (TO 4) FY2021 Implementation Plan (third revision)

November 25	Learning Task Order (TO 4) Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (revised)
November 30	November Social Media Content for BCJCI
November 30	November Social Media Content for 100 Solutions
December 4	Learning Task Order (TO 4) Learning Agenda
December 13	Quarterly Financial Report (Y2Q1)
December 13	Quarterly Accrual Report (Y2Q1)
December 17	Learning Task Order (TO 4) Learning Agenda (revised)
December 31	December Social Media Content for BCJCI
December 31	December Social Media Content for 100 Solutions
Every Thursday	Weekly Report

## XII. SECURITY

Four factors characterized the security complexities of this quarter. Those factors were (a) ongoing, but limited, ISIS activity; (b) U.S.-Iran tensions playing out on Iraqi soil; (c) demonstrations against the level of Iranian influence and control over the Government of Iraq; and (d) COVID-19. The four factors are inextricably entwined. COVID-19, covered above in this report in detail, is noted here as it continues to negatively impact the government, economy, and posture of regional actors. It has had a profound effect on daily life in Iraq.

### ISIS ACTIVITY

ISIS activity levels at the end of the quarter were generally consistent with that of the last quarter. The bulk of activity comprised familiar forms of limited attacks against security forces units operating in historically active rural environments. Attack effectiveness remained moderate. ISIS revitalized attacks against oil and gas infrastructure targets to demonstrate the organization's continued relevance.

The previous reporting period was characterized by the stabilization of ISIS activity levels following a significant spike in ISIS activity in the months before. Monthly activity levels were also remarkably consistent

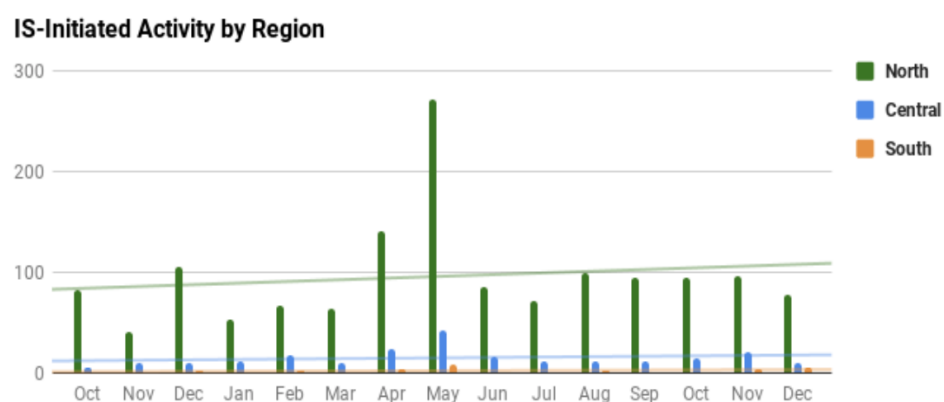


Figure 2: Monthly ISIS activity, by region, from October 2019 to December 2020. Source: Talos.

between the two quarters, with four consecutive months hovering between 107-120 incidents. With 322 incidents, Y2Q1 was the second most active quarter of the past 12 months.



A key influence for ISIS activity this quarter was assessed to involve Victory Day, the annual holiday observed on December 10 to mark the completed liberation of Iraq in late 2017. The relatively high activity levels noted in this quarter, and consistent levels from the preceding quarter, upheld the organization's long-term viability as an insurgent organization. ISIS capability to conduct classic forms of mass casualty attacks remain a shadow of historically demonstrated capabilities due to persistent ISF efforts to degrade ISIS infiltration routes extending from Syria.

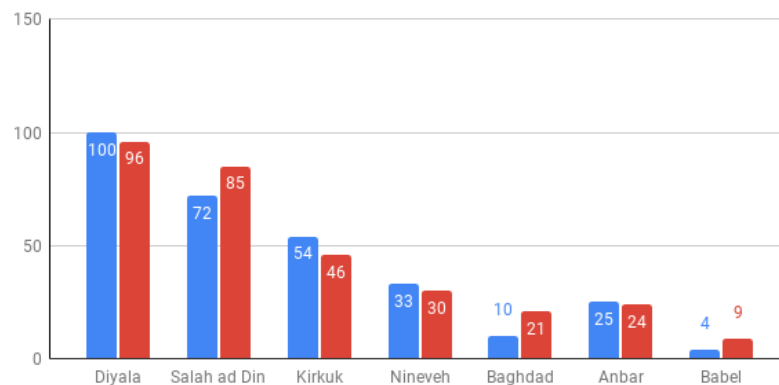


Figure 3: Comparison of ISIS activity levels this quarter (red) and last quarter (blue). Source: INSO.

## SIGNIFICANT ESCALATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND IRAN

The spike in regional tensions between the U.S. and Iran continued during the period surrounding the strategic dialogue between the U.S. and Iraqi governments with a high number of attacks against diverse U.S.-affiliated sites, IED attacks against coalition forces (CF)-contracted logistics convoys, and other activity. Decisive U.S. government responses included threats to close the U.S. Embassy if regular attacks continued, and associated threats to conduct retaliatory strikes against Iranian-backed groups. On October 10, these influences set conditions for Iranian-backed groups to announce a conditional ceasefire in attacks against U.S. interests.

The ceasefire was largely maintained for almost two months, with the sole major breach comprising a rocket attack against the U.S. Embassy on November 17. Iranian-backed groups attempted to

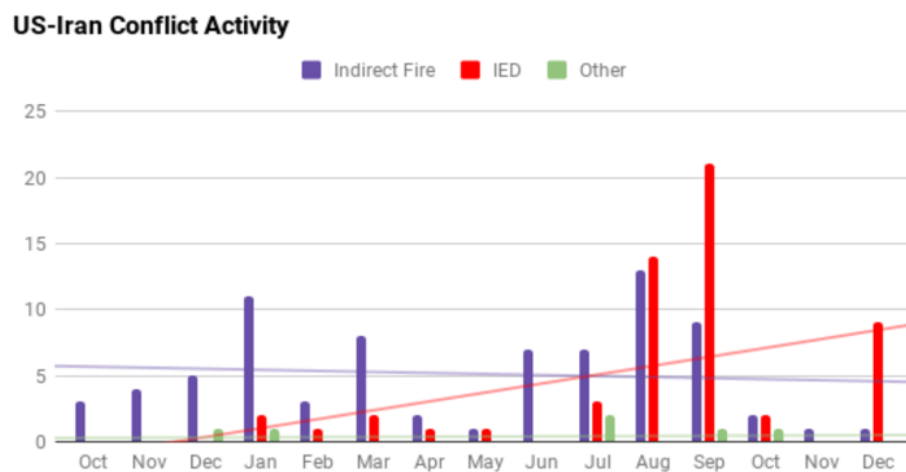


Figure 4: US-Iran Conflict Activity October 2019 to December 2020. Source: Talos

remain active through continued posturing against the U.S. and affiliated economic interests, attacks against liquor stores and other symbols of western cultural influence, and continued pressures against the October Movement. Tensions rose in the lead-up to the January 3 anniversary of the U.S. assassination of former Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani and former Popular Mobilization Committee deputy commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. Iran and its proxies reiterated the intent to seek revenge for the assassinations.

In mid-December, the U.S. initiated a significant reduction in diplomatic staff. Around December 9, Iranian-backed groups announced an intent to resume attacks against U.S. interests in Iraq. Initial activity involved the cautious renewal of IED attacks against CF-contracted logistics convoys and a small rocket attack near Baghdad International Airport that gained little attention. The most controversial incident was another rocket attack against the U.S. Embassy on December 20. The incident involved the employment of over 21 rockets, representing the largest-scale attack against the U.S. Embassy since 2010. Embassy buildings sustained some damage, but fortunately there were no deaths reported.

Iran and its proxies attempted to distance themselves from the attack and other recent activity. This included conjecture that a particularly militant militia was conducting unauthorized actions. While not implausible, it was also important to consider the substantial lengths Iran has undertaken to maintain plausible deniability for involvement in attacks against U.S. interests in the region. This includes an ever-widening multi-tier system of proxies and offshoots believed to act as front groups.

## PROTESTS

Unrest levels during the quarter remained stable in much of Iraq, reflecting a variety of familiar issues including demands for employment, salary payments for the public sector, and persistent albeit reduced activities of the October Movement. There were 680 major protests recorded in the South during this period, as compared to 754 in the previous quarter. There were also 203 demonstrations recorded in Baghdad this as compared to 242 last quarter.

### Demonstrations by Region

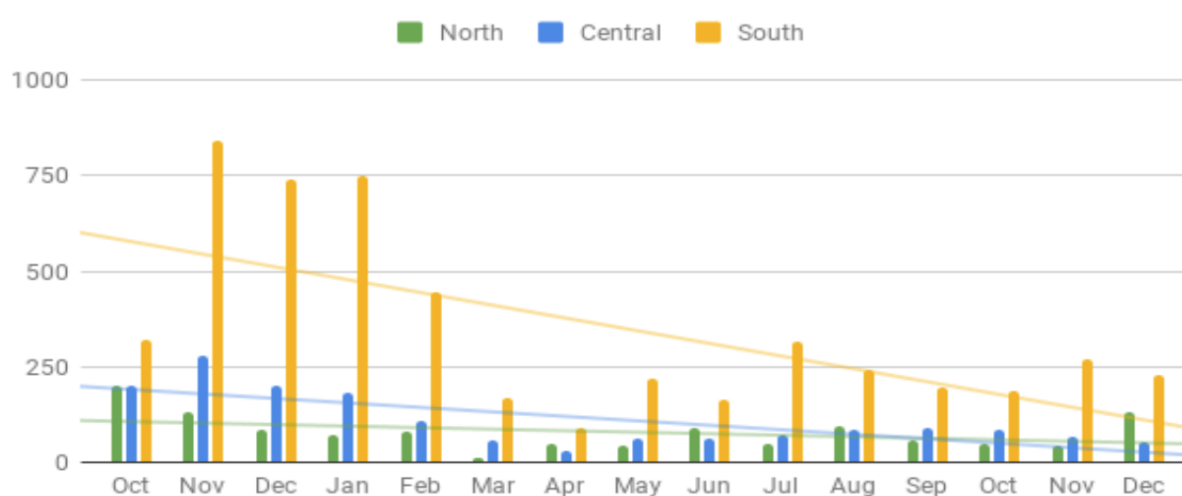


Figure 5: Anti-government demonstrations recorded throughout Iraq, by region, from October 2019-December 2020.

A lull in October Movement protests was in effect during much of October due to the Arba'een pilgrimage. Of note, a significant incident occurred during the pilgrimage culmination in Karbala on October 6, when dozens of protest-affiliated pilgrims were assaulted. In the effort to revive the movement's momentum, thousands of protesters gathered throughout central and southern Iraq on October 24-26 to mark the one-year anniversary of the deadly protest events that occurred on October 25, 2019.

As the movement struggled to maintain attendance levels amid the epidemic and protest fatigue, protesters struck agreements to vacate some of the most prominent sit-in sites under pressure from ISF. In Baghdad, Tahrir Square and other key locations were reopened for vehicle transit by October

31. While events in Baghdad remained largely peaceful, the removal of tents from the Naval Command Roundabout in Basrah city escalated into sizable altercations. Activists vowed to continue to protest despite the suppression efforts, but the future of the October Movement remains uncertain.

### **XIII. IN THE NEWS**

The news in Iraq focused on the COVID crisis, continued violence in parts of the country, and high unemployment rates. Selected stories are highlighted below. Please refer to Annex D for links to additional stories that are representative of the quarter.

#### **IRAQ'S EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE FOR UNEMPLOYED AND GRADUATES**

The Iraqi Council of Ministers (COM) launched an employment initiative to create job opportunities for graduates and the job seekers throughout the country. In a joint press conference with MOLSA, the Prime Minister's spokesperson, Mr. Ahmed Mulla Talal, said that COM has been working for weeks to activate the Federal Service Council in order to create job opportunities for unemployed young job seekers and graduates.

The Minister of Labor and Social Affairs stated that "There are 1 million unemployed including 8,000 master's degree holders and 2,000 with a doctorate degree registered with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, noting that the Federal Service Council will have an active and vital role in the coming period to create job opportunities, one of the main demands of protesters".  
[<https://tinyurl.com/y2e378dp>]

#### **MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION ANNOUNCED THE CLOSURE OF 15 IDP CAMPS**

The Minister of Immigration and Displacement, Ivan Faiq Jabbro, announced the closure of 15 IDP camps in central and northern Iraqi provinces, appreciating efforts exerted by international and local organizations to end this issue.

"The Ministry conducted extensive surveys in IDP camps in several provinces, including the Kurdistan region, in order to seek IDP opinions about their willingness to return to their areas of origin, or to stay in camps," said Jabbro, who added that "Ministry staff came to a conclusion that displaced families aspire and dream of going back to their areas and settling there. Ministry offices have also received thousands of requests with signatures from the displaced to return to their areas, especially from the camps of Sulaimaniyah, Erbil, and Ninewa."



*The Minister of Immigration and Displacement, Ivan Faiq Jabbro, announced the closure of 15 IDP camps in central and northern Iraqi provinces. Source: [INA News](#)*

She added, "the Ministry, in coordination with other ministries and relevant authorities, had already started the voluntary return of IDPs to their areas of origin, focusing on stages of rehabilitation and reconstruction undertaken by concerned ministries in these areas." The Minister called on international and local organizations to direct their efforts in the coming period to support the

returnees with projects that contribute to the stabilization of the liberated areas." [https://tinyurl.com/y2chbv87]

In a related development, hundreds of displaced families left Hammam Al-Alil camp, south of Mosul,



*48,000 IDPs have been informed that the camps where they live will be closed by the end of November. Source: [Rudaw News](#)*

while authorities continued to close displacement camps across the country. Camp residents stated that they had nowhere to go and were forced to leave.

One person, Om Mohannad, said "We have no place to live. We were not given adequate time to find a place and the authorities should have given us a month or two to prepare for leaving. They [said] that we have voluntarily left the camp, but the fact is that they forced us to leave."

## US CONTINUED TO FUND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN IRAQ

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) welcomed the new generous contribution from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration for UNHCR's Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response activities for internally displaced persons, returnees, and refugees in Iraq.

UNHCR's recent protection monitoring revealed a rise in domestic violence and GBV as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This contribution will allow UNHCR to continue providing much needed protection and GBV responses for communities in Iraq. In particular, this contribution will be directed towards activities aimed at survivor-centered GBV prevention and response, including individual case management, awareness campaigns, capacity building of specialized government and local service providers, psycho-social counselling, and legal services.

U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Matthew H. Tueller said "The United States is committed to helping the survivors of gender-based violence and preventing its occurrence. We have a long history of partnership with UNHCR and are honored to support their work to promote women's and girls' safety, security, and access to justice." [https://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2020/11/21/us-continues-to-fund-gbv-prevention-in-iraq/]

## XIV. NEXT QUARTER

### LOOKING FORWARD

In the next quarter, the Management Task Order will continue to support the implementation task orders. This work will include brief assessments of how DCEO can contribute to the growth and revitalization of Iraqi agriculture and use of alternative energy sources, such as solar. It will also include training for staff and partners, including Trauma Sensitive Approaches training.

Specific activities under BCJCI anticipated in Y2Q2 include:

- Profiling, signing up and supporting client firms in all of our Geographic Corridors with a full complement of BCs.

- Development of a growing number of Client Growth Plans which are the basis for assistance to Iraqi firms.
- Identifying and contracting appropriate internal and subcontracted expertise to meet client needs, once those needs have been more established, including through setting up cooperation and coordination routines with other implementers working in similar areas (e.g. SME support, investment facilitation and access to finance, tech and innovation, etc.).
- Issuing a series of quick wins that provide rapid and timely support to high potential businesses and business-supporting organizations, especially in the areas of (i) helping Iraq's economy withstand COVID, and (ii) support to Anbar's economy.
- Start of a 13-week full-time incubator program for Iraqi entrepreneurs selected through Five One Labs' Ignite program.
- Additional advisory agreements between CrossBoundary and Iraqi firms to represent good potential for international capital investment
- Awards of approximately five grants to a variety of business and trade associations to encourage and enable their work building a more private sector enabling environment.
- Capacity building for business association begins to develop skills in effective advocacy campaigns.

Specific activities under 100 Solutions anticipated in Y2Q2 include:

- Community problem solving dialogue and community-led conflict system analysis being conducted in all six Year One 100 Solutions communities.
- Community identified quick wins projects completed in Batnaya, Mosul Old City, and Mosul University.
- Quick wins projects identified in Bahraka (Erbil), Zubair (Basra), and Tamim (Ramadi, Anbar).
- Emerging/established community leaderships receive DCEO support to build leadership, advocacy, and mobilization skills.
- Six grants awarded to Iraqi organizations to support their work assisting Marla Fund beneficiaries to re-establish livelihoods, start or accelerate businesses, and/or to get jobs.
- Micro-business start-ups and preparatory job training continued to be delivered to Marla Fund eligible beneficiaries by subcontractor PLC.

Specific activities under the Learning Task Order anticipated in Y2Q2 include:

- Data collection to support eventual analysis and response to the learning questions.
- Design of the scopes of work for the gender, conflict, and political economy assessments to assure they are responsive to (a) the learning questions and (b) development of learning questions for FY2022.
- Initial planning of analysis tools and format for learning events and products.
- Identification of potential STTA to support on technical analysis, responding to the learning questions.

## Y2Q2 DELIVERABLES

Table 8 lists the deliverables that are due next quarter.

**TABLE 8. DELIVERABLES DUE IN Y2Q2**

DATE	DELIVERABLE
January 30	Quarterly Report (Y2Q1)
January 31	January Social Media Content for BCJCI

January 31	January Social Media Content for 100 Solutions
February 14	TEAMS Report
February 28	February Social Media Content for BCJCI
February 28	February Social Media Content for 100 Solutions
March 15	Quarterly Financial Report (Y2Q2)
March 15	Quarterly Accrual Report (Y2Q2)
March 31	March Social Media Content for BCJCI
March 31	March Social Media Content for 100 Solutions
Every Thursday	Weekly Report

## ANNEX A: BCJCI PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TRACKER

BCJCI FY2021 Yearly Indicator Tracker							
#	Indicator	Annual Target FY 2021	Actual Achievement Year-to-Date	Variance achievement Year-to-Date	Achievement [Percentage]	LOP	Remarks
1	Sales of firms receiving US government funded assistance	1 M USD				+\$25 million USD from baseline	
2	Number of firms accessing new domestic or international markets	5				100	
3	Number of firms receiving USG-funded technical assistance for improving business performance	30				250	
4	Full-time equivalent employment of firms receiving USG assistance	125				3,125	
5	Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)	TBD				TBD	
6	Number of private sector firms that have improved management practices or technologies as a result of USG assistance	10				200	
7	Number of policy or regulatory constraints identified	TBD				TBD	
8	Number of business associations or business service providers receiving USG assistance	TBD				TBD	
9	Number of client enterprises participating in business associations	5				+100	
10	Number of members in business associations receiving USG assistance	TBD				TBD	

## ANNEX B: 100 SOLUTIONS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TRACKER

100 Solutions FY2021 Yearly Indicator Tracker							
#	Indicator	Annual Target FY 2021	Actual Achievement Year-to-Date	Variance achievement Year-to-Date	Achievement [Percentage]	LOP	Remarks
1	Percent of vulnerable community members that feel their community is better able to recover from political, economic, and social instability	20%				25% [Average]	NA
2	Number of practical solutions to conflict drivers identified by communities	120				450	NA
3	Number of new groups or initiatives created through U.S. government funding and dedicated to resolving conflict or conflict drivers	30				100	NA
4	Number of USG-funded events, trainings, or activities designed to build support for peace or reconciliation on a mass scale	50				400	NA
5	Number of people participating in USG-supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation	500				10,000	NA
6	Number of USG supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build support for peace or reconciliation among key actors to the conflict	25				200	NA
7	Number of practical solutions implemented with community participation dedicated to resolving conflict or conflict drivers	30				100	NA
8	Percent of vulnerable community members expressing more confidence in key leadership actors and institutions in their community	20%				25% [Average]	NA
9	Number of groups trained in conflict mediation/resolution skills or consensus-building techniques with USG assistance	5				20	NA
10	Number of training sessions on community dialogue, GESI integration, design of solutions	5				20	NA



	to conflict drivers, or related topics completed						
11	Number of institutional actors engaged in implementation of solutions	TBD				TBD	NA
12	Dollar value of resources mobilized in target communities to support implementation of solutions to mitigate conflict drivers	\$400,000				\$2 million	NA
13	Number of Marla Fund beneficiaries supported	400	40	360	10%	2500	NA
14	Average percent change in earnings following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs	50%				50%	NA
15	Percent of individuals with new employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs	60%				60%	NA
16	Percent of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs	75%				75%	NA
17	Number of community assets provided or improved under the Marla Fund	TBD				TBD	NA

## ANNEX C: LOCAL STAFF RECRUITMENT

Table 9 lists local staff recruited to date under the Management Task Order (TO 1), BCJCI (TO 2), and 100 Solutions (TO 3), in order of start dates.

TABLE 9. IRAQI STAFF							
#	NAME	POSITION	START DATE	LOCATION	TASK ORDER		
					1	2	3
1	Riyadh Sahib Ali	Communications and Reporting Manager	February 23	Baghdad	x		
2	Khaleel Ibraheem Saeed	MEL Specialist	March 1	Baghdad	x		
3	Ali Mohammed Kadhim Jawad	Knowledge Management Manager	March 8	Baghdad	x		
4	Kawther Qays Juboori	Grants and Activity Manager	March 15	Baghdad	x		
5	Yousef Ahmed Khalaf	Finance Manager	March 16	Erbil	x		
6	Farshid Shaho Sardar	MEL Manager	March 18	Erbil	x		
7	Omar Salah Ali	Operations Manager	March 23	Baghdad	x		
8	Omer Adil Sulaiman	Operations Manager Erbil	April 1	Erbil	x		
9	Mohammed Saleh Othman	Procurement and Logistics Manager	April 1	Erbil	x		
10	Thabit Khudur	Private Sector Network Advisor (CIPE)	April 20	Baghdad	x		
11	Wael Abdulsattar Jabbar	MSME Advisor	April 20	Baghdad	x		
12	Hanaa Hamid Mahmood	Entrepreneurship Advisor	April 26	Baghdad	x		
13	Shara Sabir Majid	HR Specialist	May 3	Erbil	x		
14	Basheer Abdulqader Mohammed	Security Manager Erbil	May 3	Erbil	x		
15	Osamah Zaid Ali	Conflict Mitigation and Adaptive Capacity Advisor	May 13	Baghdad	x		
16	Mijid Saad Hussein	Erbil Bookkeeper	May 17	Erbil	x		
17	Zaid Kadhim Abdulsahab	Baghdad Operations and Admin Assistant	July 12	Baghdad	x		
18	Hawkar Sarhang Mustafa	Operations and Admin Assistant-Erbil	July 19	Erbil	x		
19	Emad Khaleel Ibrahim	MEL Specialist	August 4	Basrah		x	x
20	Moamin Abdulsahib Neameh	MEL Specialist	August 4	Baghdad		x	

21	Alyaa Khaleel Hammoodi	MEL Specialist	August 4	Baghdad		x
22	Jalal Kamal Ali	MEL Specialist	August 4	Erbil	x	
23	Sulaiman Sherwan Shukri	KM Specialist	August 9	Erbil	x	x
24	Hanaa Tahir Salih	MEL Specialist	August 9	Erbil		x
25	Barzan Mohammed Hassan	IT Security Specialist	August 9	Erbil	x	
26	Anmar Abdulrazzaq Ahmed	Security Manager	August 9	Baghdad	x	
27	Rana Muneer Abdulkareem	Inclusion Advisor	August 9	Baghdad	x	
28	Marwan Abdulsattar Ahmed	Grants Officer	August 9	Erbil		x
29	Yahya Abdulameer Othman	Senior Grants Specialist	August 10	Baghdad		x
30	Ali Hadi Mulla	Community Cohesion Manager	August 10	Baghdad		x
31	Ali Hamid Alfatlawi	Procurement Compliance Manager	August 16	Baghdad		x
32	Shakir Thana Almusa	Grants Officer	August 16	Basrah	x	x
33	Rawan Sardar Mam Ali	Grants Officer	August 16	Erbil	x	
34	Sahar Mohammed Ali Hussein	Grants Specialist	August 18	Erbil	x	x
35	Mohammad Qasim Mohammed	Grants Officer	August 30	Baghdad		x
36	Ali Abdulrazzaq Mahdi	Senior Grants Finance Officer	September 1	Baghdad		x
37	Lana Jabbar Razooq	Communications and Reporting Specialist	September 14	Erbil	x	x
38	Salwan Niyazi Anwer	Business Counselor	September 14	Erbil	x	
39	Zaenab Ali Hussein	Communications and Reporting Specialist	September 20	Baghdad	x	x
40	Nazdar Ameen	Business Counselor	September 20	Erbil	x	
41	Galawezh Mahmood Bayiz	Marla Fund Manager	September 20	Erbil		x
42	Saja Muzahem Sadqi Salam	Community Coordination Officer	September 20	Ninewa		x

43	Snoor Ahmed Mohammed	Community Coordination Officer	October 1	Erbil		x
44	Abbas Fadhil Yousif	Community Coordination Officer	October 4	Basrah		x
45	Noor Ahmed Ameen	Junior Business Counselor	October 12	Baghdad	x	
46	Fakher Imad Taki	HR Assistant	October 12	Baghdad	x	x
47	Ayad Sameer Muhammed	Bookkeeper	October 13	Baghdad	x	
48	Ahmed Nasir Yousif	Community Coordination Officer	October 13	Ninewa		x
49	Hayfaa Chasib Hasan	Finance Specialist	October 22	Baghdad	x	x
50	Simon Sabah Hanna	Junior Business Counsellor	November 3	Erbil	x	
51	Zainab Abdulhamed Salih	Community Coordination Officer	November 8	Anbar		x
52	Hind Abduljaleel Mohammed Ali	Business Counsellor	November 22	Basrah	x	
53	Shahad Faisal Ahmed	Procurement Assistant	December 28	Baghdad		x

## ANNEX D: MEDIA LINKS

TABLE 10. MEDIA LINKS

TITLE	DATE	SOURCE	LINK
COR Commits to Pass Law Guaranteeing Rights of Yezidi Female Survivors	October 5	Shafaq News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Minister of Labor: 1,500 Yezidi families covered by Social Protection Network Aid	October 8	INA News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Iraqi government launches online portal to help job seekers find employment in public and private sectors	October 12	Government of Iraq	<a href="#">Link</a>
Iraqi President calls for passing Yezidi female survivors' law	October 24	Rudaw Digital	<a href="#">Link</a>
Al-Kadhimi: The Government is serious about improving the investment environment	October 31	INA News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministry of Health: First batch of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to arrive in Iraq	November 02	INA News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Moderna vaccine boosts global hopes as restrictions to combat coronavirus tighten	November 06	Rudaw	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministry of Health: Iraq to import additional quantities of coronavirus vaccines	November 22	INA News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Will reopening of border crossing drive Saudi investment in Iraq?	November 28	Al-Monitor	<a href="#">Link</a>
Health experts warn of five places where most COVID-19 infections occur	December 05	Shafaq News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministry of Health suspends schools with five cases of COVID-19	December 08	Shafaq News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Plans to register 100 Saudi companies in Iraq to boost trade	December 09	Saudi Gazette	<a href="#">Link</a>
Iraq reserves 8 million doses of British coronavirus vaccine	December 11	Shafaq News	<a href="#">Link</a>
Al-Kadhimi promotes Iraq to Turkish businessmen	December 19	Iraq-Business News	<a href="#">Link</a>